

4139. a. 27.



T H E

Whole Truth ;

Or, a full Display of those

SENTIMENTS,

FOR WHICH

Some have been excommunicated

A CERTAIN

Independent Church in LONDON.





T H E
Whole Truth ;

O R,

A full Display of those *Sentiments*,
for which some have been excommu-
nicated a certain *Independent Church*
in L O N D O N.

Being a true C O P Y of a

L E T T E R,

Which the late

Mr. *JOHN ALLEN*,

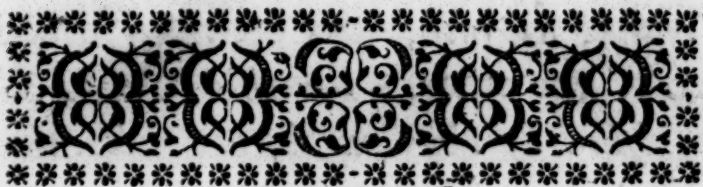
Who was under the said Church's Censures for
the same *Sentiments*, sent to the Church some
time before his Death ; but it being rejected
and not read, was prepared for the Press, first
by himself, and now made publick at the De-
fire both of Relations and Friends.

*Thou shalt not follow a Multitude to do Evil ; neither shalt thou speak
in a Cause to decline after many, to wrest Judgment. Exod. xxiii. 2.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. N O T T A G E, and Sold by
T. C O O P E R, at the *Globe* in *Pater-Noster-*
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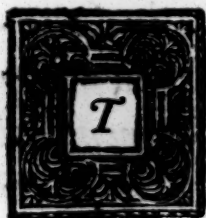




T H E

P R E F A C E.

Candid Reader,



THOU mayst safely depend that what is now before thee is an exact Copy, without the least Alteration, of the Letter which the late Mr. John Allen sent to an Independent Church of which he was a Member, and under whose Censures he lay for some time, ('till the Lord was pleased to remove him hence) only because he firmly denied that Jesus Christ was the eternally begotten Son of God, or in

ii. *The* P R E F A C E.

other Words, that one Person in the Trinity, as such, was eternally begotten of the other. For this he was admonished by the Church, but still rested (thro' Grace) in the same Opinion; even when his Desolution seem'd to draw nigh, he was quite the Reverse from altering his Sentiments. It was surmised by some indeed, that God had taken him out of the Land of the Living as a Judgment upon him for this Error, as it was called; but in Opposition to this, let it be consider'd, why might not such a Stroke be a Repremand to the Church; a Providence to shew them, that the Lord would not suffer them to fulfil all the Imaginations of their Hearts, especially against one who had so boldly stood up for the Honour of his Redeemer? Besides, had Death been as a Judgment to him, it is highly probable the Lord would not have afforded him his gracious Presence in that Hour;

The P R E F A C E. iii.

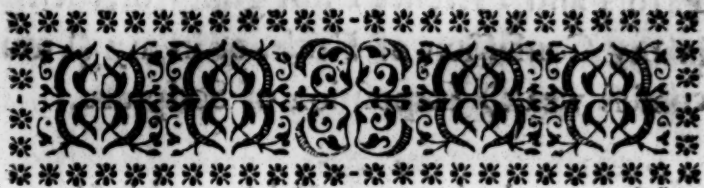
Hour; which that he did, was ever seen, when the Deliriums, into which his Fever run him, abated; at those Times, all who were with him can testify, that he really appeared to enjoy much of God, as his future Portion and exceeding great Reward.

*I need not relate here the Reasons he had for sending this Letter to the Church, because he in the Letter declares them; only let this be noted, that had not the kind Hand of Death (kind I mean with regard to himself) carried him to that Assembly and Church of the first-born in the New Jerusalem, where no Excommunications can ever reach him, he was to have been excluded the Independent Church to which he was related, for holding the Sentiments he discovers in these Pages. Whether such Sentiments merit Excommunication? or whether the Church should not in
Justice*

iv. *The* P R E F A C E.

Justice have heard, as he desired, those Things from his own Mouth which are now printed? or whether after all, they should not have read his Letter? must be determined by all impartial Persons, who truly understand the Nature of an Independent Church, with the Freedom and Right of its Members.

A true



A TRUE COPY
OF A
LETTER, &c.

BRETHREN,

MY Reasons for sending this to you are two: *First*, Lest any of the Brethren should have been mis-informed; or lest any of you should have mistaken me in what I said: And therefore I do now declare, that if I have said any thing contrary to what is herein express'd, I do now retract it, and hope you'll excuse it as a Slip of the Tongue, rather than an Error in Judgment. And, *Secondly*, That if you proceed in the Manner you have begun, the World may judge what

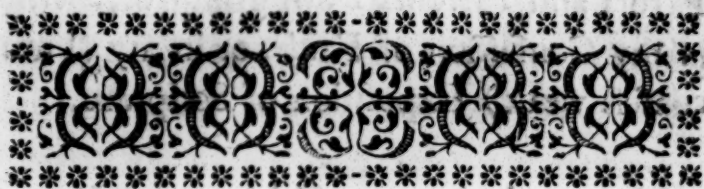
B

Errors

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B

Errors

Errors and Heresies I am guilty of, either in my Confession of Faith, or in my (I must confess weak) Exposition of Scripture.

Now to declare my Faith, with Regard to the Trinity of Persons in the one undivided Essence, I would do it thus: *First*, I believe there is but one God, agreeable to that Text, Deut. vi. 4. *Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord.* And another, Isai. xlv. 6. *Besides me there is no God.* And that in this one God, is all the Perfections of Deity essentially residing, as, Eternity, Self-Existency, Omniscieny, Omnipresency, Almighty, Incomprehensible, Immensity, Infinity, &c. and all divine Attributes, as, infinite Wisdom, Justice, Holiness, Mercy, Goodness, and Truth.

But then I further believe, according to the Warrant of the Holy Ghost, that there are three distinct Persons in this one undivided God; and that according to their Nature and divine Names, they are co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal, without
any

any Procedure one from another ; for *there are three that bare Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost ;* and likewise that there is not one thing applicable to one Person, but it's equally applicable to the other two, with respect to divine Attributes, Perfections, Honours, &c. I further believe that *the Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us,* according to Joh. i. 14. or that (in other Words) the second glorious Person in the ever-adorable Trinity took into Union with his own divine Person, human Nature, and is now but the one Person of the Mediator, tho' he hath two Natures ; *forasmuch as the Children were Partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself took Part of the same.*

I likewise believe that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, yea, that he is the everlasting Son of the everlasting Father ; that is, that he, as the Glory-Man, in Union to the divine Word, was set up from Everlasting as the Wisdom Mediator.

I likewise believe it to be my indispenfible Duty to take Things as the Holy Ghofl is pleafed to lay them down, and not feperate thofe Things which I humbly conceive God in his Word hath infeperably joined together. So, as the God-Man is in fuch a myfterious Manner united, as to be but one Perfon (and as fuch confidered in all his Acts, as tranfacting in the Covenant, and in Man's Redemption, &c.) was the Perfon of the Son of God. But tho' we are not to divide his Natures, yet I humbly conceive we may diftinguifh them; as when I fpeak of the divine Nature in an abftract Senfe, he is the Word; when of the human Nature in an abftract Senfe, he is the Man Chrift Jefus. But I look on him now as a Perfon in the Trinity cloathed with our Nature, to be the Perfon of the Son of God: And as the Term Son of God is applicable to him in Scripture as the Perfon of the Mediator, (as *the Blood of Jefus Chrift, his Son, cleanfeth us from all Sin*) then (fpeaking for myfelf) was I to call him begotten Son
of

of God only in his divine Nature, I am afraid I should seperate that which God hath joined.

Now whereas it hath been reported from without, that our Church hath *Sabellians* in it; and it was said at the Church-Meeting, that what we urged was *Arianism*, give me Leave to use the Words of a certain Person, speaking of an Author that had bespatter'd him. " We cannot (says he) but " complain of this as an Injury done us, " and insist that the Person retract it; if " these were Consequences justly deducible " from our Principles, he ought not to represent us, as holding of them, when we " at the same time utterly disavow them: " This is not fair Dealing." But lest this should not be thought enough, I shall endeavour according to the best of my poor Ability, to prove the proper Deity, and distinct Personality of my dear Lord Jesus Christ.

First, Then as to his Deity or the Divinity of Christ, I shall endeavour to prove it, 1st by his divine Names, as, *Isai.*

ix. 6. *The mighty God, and everlasting Father.* And Rom. ix. 5. *Over all, and God blessed for ever.* And 1 Tim. vi. 14, 15. *Until the Appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which in his Times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* And Rev. i. 8. *I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.* And Verse 11. *The First and the Last.* From these Portions of Holy Writ, I fairly gather the proper Deity of Christ; or that Christ is the Almighty God, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, the First and Last, the blessed and only Potentate, But 2^{dly}. By his divine Perfections and Attributes, as he is prov'd to be God, then to him, as God, belongs all the Perfections of Deity, as, Eternity, Self-existency, Independency, Omnipotency, &c. and Wisdom, Justice, Truth, &c. These belong only to Deity; we prove Deity to belong to Christ, therefore Christ is the eternal, almighty, self-existent, independent Jehovah. Don't mistake me, I don't

don't mean as some have expressed, that the human Nature is so, but the divine Word, that was made Flesh. It might also be prov'd from his divine Works, and divine Ascriptions of Praise to him; but let what I have said suffice. But,

Secondly. To prove his distinct Personality, the Word of God declares, 1 John v. 7. *There are three that bare Record in Heaven.* I know *Sabellians* have raised an Objection, and say, three what? the Word don't name Persons, but means Characters or Offices. True, I say, the Word don't name Persons, but it manifestly implies Persons under these Characters, and how incongruous would it be, for the Holy Ghost to say a Character or an Office bares Record, for that's only a Property belonging to the Person. Again, how Strange it is for the Holy Ghost to say there are three, and yet mean but one. Wherefore I think it's manifest that these are personal Names here, and are spoken of as such in other Parts of the sacred Writings. The Person of the
Father

Father needs no Proof, and as for the Spirit or Holy Ghost, it's said, speaking of Christ, *Who through the eternal Spirit, offered himself to God.* And Isai. xlviii. 16. *The Lord God, and his Spirit hath sent me.* But to be as brief as possible, I shall pass this, and likewise some Texts of Scripture that speak of the Personality of the Word, as, Heb. iv. 12. and Rev. xiii. 13. and only take Notice of one unanswerable Passage of Holy Writ, which easily answers the *Sabellians* Objection, and will stand in the Face of all Opposition, and that is Joh. i. 1. *The Word was God, and the same was with God.* The second glorious Person in the Trinity that was graciously pleased to make himself known to us by the Name Word, *was* God; there is his proper Deity; and as nothing in Scripture is superfluous, so certainly the Phrase *with*, must signify with another: It would be very incongruous to say, I was with myself. So as the Holy Ghost hath been pleased to speak according to our Capacities, the Phrase *with*, must hold forth a distinct Person. But, Oh! I am
griev'd.

griev'd to think, that any of the dear Children of God, to maintain an Opinion, should say, that the *Word* don't signify proper Deity. God forbid that any of us should desire to be wise above what is written; for the Holy Ghost declares, and who dare deny it, that *the Word was God, he was God*. I can't think but that, with a little Reflection, they will see, that the Person of the *Word* is God, whatever Quibblings they may make about the Name the Person is pleased to reveal himself by: However I dare not go any other Way, than the scriptural one, and there the Holy Ghost plainly tells us, that *the Word was God, and was with God; was God*, there's his proper Deity; *was with God*, there's his distinct Personality.

But then it is reported that I have denied the Sonship of Christ, and a Brother of the Church said to me, that Brother R--e had told him, that I did deny the Personality of the Son. I shall therefore endeavour, as the Lord shall enlighten me into

into his Word, to vindicate myself from these foul Aspersions ; and as a Brother of the Church , whom I very much value, said, he hoped I would let you know how he was a Son, if not in your Sense, I shall freely and candidly open my Thoughts to you ; and if I should say any thing wrong, I hope you will shew it to me, and if prov'd to be so, I shall, with all Humility readily own my Fault.

It is allowed on the other Side, (by a great Man) that the Mediator is Son of God, but that his being a Mediator did not constitute him a Son. Now I apprehend it thus, *viz.* That it was the eternal Will of Jehovah in all his infinite Persons, that one of the glorious Three, (*viz.* he, who was pleased to make himself known to us by the Name *Word*) should take Flesh. Now (if I remember right) the Learned say, that the putting two Things together, and bringing forth one, is generating. Thus the divine Word and the Glory-Man was united or put together, and so generated, and became, or was

was brought forth as the Person of the God-Man, the Person of the Mediator, or the Person of the Son. And this I think I fairly gather from those Passages of Holy Writ recorded in the viiith of Proverbs, which Chapter, I humbly conceive, is plainly speaking of the Mediator; and is carried by our late worthy Pastor to him as Mediator. *I Wisdom* (says he) *dwell with Prudence*; by which I understand the Wisdom Mediator, set up from Everlasting: Well he saith Ver. 24. *When there was no Depths, I was brought forth*; and Ver. 25. *Before the Mountains were settled; before the Hills was I brought forth*. Here the Holy Ghost hath laid down the Words *brought forth* twice, that we may take the more Notice of it. Now to be brought forth signifies, as I humbly apprehend, a Birth, (*Shall I bring to the Birth, and not bring forth, saith the Lord*) and a Birth signifies begetting. Thus (speaking for myself,) I humbly conceive, that the true begetting the Son of God is the Union of two Natures, and bringing forth the Person of the Son Mediator, before the Mountains

Mountains were settled. And indeed Brethren, I do humbly think, with all due Submission, according to that small Measure of Light my Lord hath been pleased to favour me with, that the general Scope of the Word of God that speaks of the Word *Son*, &c. are Proofs of his Sonship in this Sense. And now I humbly beg Leave to tell you what I take to be the Sense or Meaning of those controverted Texts that speak of the Word *Son* and *begotten Son*, and how I humbly conceive we may fairly take them as Proofs of the above Assertion, without the least Infringement upon them, or forcing them in the least Respect.

And here I beg Leave to make a Remark by the Way, and that is this; that the Person of the Mediator, the God-Man, or Son, is not the Father's Servant, as such, but is, when consider'd in his Office of Mediator: And likewise, tho' I have thus understood the Union of the two Natures, yet not to confound them, each Nature remaining still the same. But to return: Now
I

I am going about such a Work as this is, may the Lord grant, that I may not be suffered to open my Mouth or touch Paper with my Pen to the Dishonour or Diminution of the Glory of my glorious Redeemer and Saviour, no not in the least Respect. The first Text is Psal. ii. 7. *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee.* This Text is carried by the Apostle Paul, not only to his Resurrection, (Acts xiii. 33.) but to his being the mediatorial Priest of God. Heb v. 5. *So also, Christ glorified not himself, to be made an High Priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee.* He, I apprehend, was an infallible Expofitor of Scripture, and I hope I shall not offend when I say he hath not a parallel Man now in being. Besides, our late honoured Pastor says thus, speaking of the Text; “ For that also speaks of the Mat-
 “ ter of these union Settlements about the
 “ Redeemer. ’Tis a common and re-
 “ ceived Opinion of Divines, that these
 “ Words are spoken of the eternal Genera-
 “ tion of the Son of God. I shall prove
 C the

“ the former Truth against the latter
 “ Opinion, by three Arguments.” (Observe
 he calls the first a Truth, the latter an
 Opinion only) In short, he goes on for several
 Pages, to prove it, that the Mediator
 is God’s Son. The reason I quote this eminent
 Servant of Christ is, because he was in
 the Eternal Generation Scheme: But seeing
 this Text, I say seeing this Text to have
 a manifest Reference to the Mediator, he
 I believe faithfully spoke his Mind. He
 saith, Page 92 of his great Book. “ And
 “ so you have the Coherence plain for the
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 “ Father’s begetting him his mediatorial
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 “ in applying of it to *this Day*. A
 “ Day begins, say the Period were a
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 “ 100,000 Years, yet this long Day will
 “ have a Beginning. (Page 94) What can
 “ be plainer then that the same begetting
 “ him, was as a filial Mediator, or a
 “ mediatorial Son into his Throne.”
 (Whereas, to call him Son as Mediator,
 Brother

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The next Text is Matt. xi. 27. *All Things are delivered unto me of my Father: And no Man knoweth the Son, but the Father: Neither knoweth any Man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* I apprehend these Words not spoke of the divine Nature in an abstract Sense, because it's said, *all Things are delivered unto me*; for as God, he had all Things essentially in himself; but I humbly conceive they were delivered to him as Mediator, *for it pleased the Father, that in him all Fulness should dwell.*

The next is Joh. i. 18. *No Man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the Bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.* Considering him as a divine Person in an abstract Sense, he was the most High God himself, and therefore needed as much to be revealed as the other two glorious Persons; but *God who at &c. speak to our Fathers &c. hath spoken to us by his Son.* Not Deity in an abstract Sense that spoke to us, but as Mediator he revealed God to

us. Therefore I humbly conceive this Text spoke of him, as God's only begotten mediatorial Son.

Another is Matt. xxviii. 19. *Go teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* I humbly conceive the Person of the Son here spoken of, is the divine Word, in Union with the Glory-Man; and as the Nations were first to be taught, before they were baptized, this they were to know, that they were not to worship an absolute God, but that the second Person the Son, into whose Name they were baptized, was consider'd as cloathed with our Nature. And this Exposition of the Trinity, taking in, in the second Person, human Nature, seems to be the Way our late worthy Pastor expounded the Trinity. He says, " The
 " Article and Chapter of the Trinity
 " ought not to stand as Men have set it,
 " for as they have laid it, it is very remote
 " from the evengelical Revelation of God
 " in Christ; rather the whole Chapter, or

“ Chapters ought to be taken in Pieces and
 “ new mended, in the systematical Draughts
 “ thereof. It should be inwrought with,
 “ by, and through Christ, as Christ; and
 “ then it would be an Article, both ap-
 “ proachable to the Believer, whilst the
 “ Man was a Hiding-place, covering the
 “ Soul whilst this glorious Majesty passed
 “ by, and likewise serviceable to the
 “ *Christian Religion.*” Thus then, in Bap-
 tism, we are baptized in the Trinity, as in-
 wrought with, by, and through Christ, and
 that is known to us by the Word *Son*.

Another Text is Heb. v. 8. *Though he
 were a Son, yet learned he Obedience, by the
 Things which he suffered.* These Words, I
 apprehend, are plainly spoken of him as a
 Priest, Ver. 10. *Called of God an High Priest.*
 Besides, considering him as the most high
 God in an abstract Sense, how the eternal
 Jehovah could suffer, and learn Obedience,
 I confess I know not: But I consider him
 here as the Priest of God, and glorious
 Mediator between God and Man, in ful-
 filling

filling which great Work, he both suffered and learned Obedience.

One more is 1 Joh. iii. 8. *For this Purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil.* I humbly conceive, that as the Glory-Man in Union with the divine Word, was set up from Everlasting, in the Fulness of Time God sent him forth, or manifested him to destroy the Works of the Devil. And this Sense appears plain to me, because it seems as if the whole Scope and Tenor of God's sacred Word was this Way, viz. That the Mediator is the Son of God, as, Joh. i. 34. *I saw and bare Record that this is the Son of God. And the Voice from Heaven said this is my beloved Son.* And Luk. i. 35. *That holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.* And Joh. x. 36. *Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the World, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?* And Acts viii. 37. *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.* And Peter said,
Thou

Thou art Christ the Son of the living God. And 1 Joh. iii. 23. That we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ. And 2 Cor. i. 19. For the Son of God Jesus Christ, &c. And 1 Joh. i. 7. The Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin. Oh! this choise and comfortable Word, this sweet Word, the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son! Surely none can have such gross Ideas of this Text, as to think this is spoken of the divine Nature only, for as God he had no Blood; yet, the Blood of his Son, God's Son, &c. And lastly, Rom. v. 10. Being reconciled by the Death of his Son. Surely none will think, that the divine Word (or Son as they say) died; yet, the Death of his Son. Many more might be brought, and more said to it, but that belongs to abler Heads than mine. Thus, Brethren, I humbly apprehend (according to the small Measure of Light the Lord hath been pleased to bestow upon me) this to be the Sense of the above Passages of Holy Writ, and that thus they may be applied as Proofs of the Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ in the above Sense. And

And as to the divine Perfections, I do not see how in any manner my Sentiments clashes with them, for I believe them to be three co-eternal, and every way equal in Power, Existence and Glory, as I hope I have before prov'd.

Thus, Brethren, I have endeavoured to vindicate myself from those dismal, black and heavy Charges (tho' unjust) fastened upon me, of denying the Divinity or distinct Personality of my dear Lord Jesus Christ, or of his Sonship. I would humbly ask, what it is more the strictest Trinitarian can demand : I humbly apprehend my Declaration secures the Doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, and, I hope, the true Sonship of Christ. I do not at present see any fundamental Principle that I do deny, nor any fundamental Error that I hold. Indeed I can't see (and that is the only Thing which I do deny) that the second glorious Person in the ever - adorable Trinity (abstracted from all Considerations of his Union to human

man.

man Nature) is the begotten Son of the first, by eternal Generation and Communication of Life to his Subsistence from the Father; and so consequently the Words Eternal Son, or any thing that holds that Doctrine forth. But don't mistake me, I don't deny the Person of the Son of God, nor think there's a Word in Scripture superfluous in the least Respect; but believe that the divine Nature subsisting in the Son is the eternal Jehovah. Thus I believe the Person of the Son to be God, in the same Sense that Christ is God. Now when we prove the Deity of Christ from Rom. ix. 5. *Christ came, who is over all, and God blessed for ever*, we don't say that Christ, as the Man Christ Jesus, is God, but that his Person is the God-Man, and so the divine Nature is truly and properly God: So the Son in the same Sense is God, *i. e.* The Son is the God-Man, and so the divine Nature of the Son is God, truly and properly so. Thus we prove the Deity of the Son in the same Sense as we prove the Deity of Christ, without saying that he was, as a Person in the Trinity, *begotten*. Thus

Thus, Brethren, I have (I hope with the Lord's Assistance) given you a faithful Account of my Faith, and the Acceptance those Texts of Scripture hath with me. And I do really think, to hold the Doctrine of the blessed Trinity of three glorious Persons in its Purity, is to unclog it of those Terms Reason hath put in, (as I humbly conceive) and take it purely and alone as the Holy Ghost is pleased to lay it down. One eternal God in three Persons existing from all Eternity, (but who by searching can find out how, for that Secret belongs only to God) and that one of the glorious Three took Flesh, and, as such, is the Son of God. This is a revealed Thing, and belongs to us, and is fairly gatherable from Holy Writ.

Now, my dear Brethren, if you prove what I have here said to be contrary to the general Scope of the sacred Writings, and contrary to the Harmony of the divine Perfections, I hope the Lord will not only
open

open my Eyes to see it, but to acknowledge it also : But if to the contrary it be found, when we go to the Law and to the Testimony, that this is agreeable to it, and likewise to the Perfections of Deity, I cannot really say (I hope with due Submission and Humility) that I see myself obliged to own any Church Censure. And as I have thus far proceeded, I must beg your Patience a little longer, to tell you my Reasons for differing in Judgment ; and hope that tho' you can (as you think) get over them, and I believe do it to glorify Christ the more, yet you will say thus far ; that if I cannot get over them, I had better say as I do, than to hold the Doctrine of Eternal Generation, with so many confused Thoughts and unfurmountable Mountains of Difficulies, which would (was I to hold it) certainly accompany it. Well then, *First*, I do assure you, as a Church of Jesus Christ, in the Presence of the great God, that one Reason (in which all the rest are compriz'd) for not accepting the Doctrine of Eternal Generation, is, because I would hold the glorious Deity
and

and distinct Personality of the second glorious Person in its utmost Purity, without laying ourselves open to the Adversary in the least Respect, or giving him any Handle against us. But to branch it out, was I to hold that Doctrine, I could not account for three of the necessary Perfections that accompany Deity, *viz.* Self-Existency, Eternity, and Independency: As to the first, I can't help thinking with a certain Gentleman, but that " he that is
 " God must necessarily exist; if he does
 " not necessarily exist, his Existence must
 " be owing to some Cause, which Cause
 " must be either himself or another; not
 " another, because he that is the Cause of
 " his Existence must be God, and not he
 " himself; and if the Cause of his own Existence, then he must be, and not be, at
 " the same time, either of which is a Contradiction in Terms." If I remember right, this is very near what he says, or I am sure the Sense of his Words; however I can speak them as my Judgment; " Now
 " if one Person in the sacred Trinity is be-

D

" gotten

“ gotten of another, I could not but think,
 “ that the Begetter is the Cause of the Be-
 “ gotten’s Existence. And so as to Eter-
 “ nity, I could not (was I to hold that
 “ Doctrine) think the Begetter and the Be-
 “ gotten to be of an equal Date; but that
 “ the Begetter, as a Person, must exist be-
 “ fore the Person whom he did beget. So
 “ also Independency, the Begotten must, in
 “ some Sense or other, depend on the Be-
 “ getter for his Existence.” And now,
 Brethren, is it not better to deny the Doc-
 trine of Eternal Generation, if it must be
 attended with so many Difficulties, as it
 would to me? and to say I believe in one
 God in three Persons from all Eternity,
 but go no further? Not that I say, Brethren,
 because you hold it, that your Thoughts
 clash with any of God’s Perfections: No,
 don’t mistake me; I believe you have
 Ideas different from what I should have,
 and the Apostle says, *Whatsoever is not of*
Faith, is Sin. Now if you have Faith in
 that Doctrine, so be it: But was I to say I
 believe that Doctrine, and had no Faith in
 it,

it, it would be Sin in me: And therefore I hope it will not be taken amiss in me, for so plainly speaking my Mind here.

And now, Oh! Brethren, there is one shocking Thing to justify myself from; Oh! 'tis enough to make me tremble to relate it; surely it is not fitten to be used among Brethren in Christ, much less an Officer of a Church of Christ at an open Church-Meeting. It is an Expression of Brother D—F-----d to me, who in a short Manner said, (when I desired to speak again) “ You “ have spoke enough, and too much, for “ you have spoken Blasphemy.” (Oh! it's a black and heavy Charge; but, blessed be God, a mistaken one) And that was, because I said, was I to hold that Doctrine, I could not hold Christ's proper Deity, though I could without it, and instanced the *Word was God*, and believ'd your Ideas to be different from what mine would be, was I to hold it. This was all the Blasphemy that I said, that I know of. I think (with Submission) that in a Church of Christ, one

Brother ought to be righted as well as another:
 I therefore hope that you, as a Church of
 Christ, will deal faithfully, and not respect
 Persons. But take Notice of this, and not
 see a Brother (for I am still a Brother 'till
 cut off) thus griev'd and charg'd with
 blaspheming (Oh! who can bare so heavy
 a Charge) my dear Lord, either as to his
 Deity or distinct Personality. And I hum-
 bly apprehend, that as a Member of a Con-
 gregational Church, I have the Liberty to
 say what I please; especially, as I trust I was
 speaking for my dear Redeemer's Glory.
 Yet the same Brother said, "If you suffer
 " him to go on thus, I won't stay." And
 when I mov'd a very convenient Thing, *viz.*
 That the Question should be put to every
 one, instead of holding up Hands, the same
 Brother said, "What! do you think to
 " strengthen your Party?" And when
 another Brother in Office (*viz.* Brother
 S-----e) made for waving the Thing in
 Hand, the same Brother said, "Don't
 " let us slacken our Hands." Now, dear
 Brethren, judge if there was the least
 shew

shew of Brotherly Love in all this. And yet this same Brother told a Man four Years ago to this Effect, *viz.* " That he " had no Occasion to be much uneasy, for " as he held a Co-equality of Persons, it was " not sufficient to keep him out of a " Church." (This was said in the Presence of a Brother of the Church, and they are now both ready to attest it, and I have instanced nothing myself but what I am certain off, and could, was there Occasion, make Oath off.) Now Brethren, either by four Years longer standing, the Thing is grown sufficient, (not to keep out only, but to cut off Members, for what do those Words imply else *Don't let us slacken our Hands*, but this? Let us proceed and cut them off. Is not the Admonition a Beginning of it? And desiring us to keep away from the Communion a demonstrative Instance thereof?) or else this Brother hath changed his Mind, and so shews Fallibility, (you see it must be one of the two, Brethren) and so may again in four Years more. However I yet value him indeed, as a worthy

Brother, and look upon this to be in Warmth, but I hope not in Party Zeal. But to return,

If it be urg'd, that denying the controverted Phrase *eternally begotten Son of God*, is militating against Deity, I refer you to my Confession. If it be urged, that I am for bringing Things to Reason, I answer, I humbly conceive I do not, when all that I say is, I believe one self-existing God in three glorious Persons, but don't by Reason pretend to find out how. Now, Brethren, I would humbly ask how that is bringing Things to Reason: Indeed I have asked how those Terms (as I thought put in by Men) could be consistent, as, *Eternally begotten*, *Eternal Generation*, an *essential Communication of Life to the Son's Subsistence from the Father*, *Begotten of the Substance of the Father*, and that *Person does beget Person*, but *Essence don't beget Essence*, &c. And for Reasons before mentioned, chose to lay by these Expressions, and take it purely and alone as the Holy

ly Ghost hath laid it down, as I at first told you.

Now then, Brethren, I humbly beg Leave to inquire; (for I can't think this to be a fundamental Principle, for this Reason, viz. I am certain that many of the dear Children of God and worthy Servants of Christ are on both Sides.) *1st*, I would humbly ask, whether the general Reception of this Doctrine in Churches and the Sanction of great Men hath made it so? I would pay all due Respect to the valuable Servants of Christ to be sure, but as there hath been in all Ages valuable Men that have differed, especially in respect of Baptism, and as they were not intallible, we are not to build our Faith on them. But this don't seem to be the Case of late Years, (and if Error is not to be bore with in private Persons, much less in a Minister) for the Church never excommunicated the great Dr. *Ridgley*; neither did the *Independent* Board of Ministers (if I am rightly inform'd) take their Youth that he was bringing up for the Ministry from him,
but

but entrusted him with them to the Day of his Death ; which surely they would not have done had they thought he held fundamental Errors, yet his Principles was well known. And if I don't very much mistake myself, one of the chief Things alledged against me at the Church-Meeting was denying the Faith of the Church. But 2^{dly}, Whether the Holy Ghost hath made it so ; if he hath (God forbid that I should deny it) it seems very strange to me, at least that the Holy Ghost should be pleased to lay down all fundamental Principles so expressly, and not this ; for in all the Word of God I don't know that we ever find the Words Eternal Son, or Eternal Begotten, or Eternal Generation, or ever hear that the second glorious Person in the blessed Trinity is proceeding from the first by Eternal Generation, nor Words that imply it ; wherefore I look upon it to be no fundamental Error on either Side ; but desire to say with the Apostle, *If thou hath Faith, keep it to thyself* ; and I am very sorry when I reflect on that Heat that hath appeared among us,

for

for which I humbly conceive there was no Occasion given : And as far as I can see, the only Difference in our Thoughts is this, you think the proper Deity and distinct Personality of Christ can't be prov'd without allowing the aforementioned Words, and that those Texts of Scripture are applicable to his divine Nature only ; whereas I think the proper Deity and distinct Personality of Christ may be prov'd without allowing the forenamed Words, and that those Texts of Scripture are applicable to him as the Person of the Mediator or God-Man : Or in short thus ; you believe in one Eternal God in three Persons, and that one of the Three is begotten of another ; I believe in one Eternal God in three Persons, but go no farther. And therefore, my dear Brethren, consider what a Thing it is to hold up a Hand against a Brother for such a Thing as this is, when we are all agreed in the Fundamentals of Religion, and I hope through Grace, we all know Jesus Christ, and him crucified ; only this Difference between us.

I know, my dear Brethren, that our Lord Jesus Christ, as Head of the Body and King of Zion, hath invested you as a Church of Christ with Power and Authority to deal with your Members that hold heretical Notions; but I humbly conceive our Lord Jesus Christ hath no where said to, or ordered his People to admonish, and so on, Brethren that don't see in every Respect as they do.

And here I do assure you, my Brethren, that I greatly value my Standing among you as a Church Member, especially when I consider my own Unworthiness. But I dare not say I see in this Respect as you do; and of the two, I must rather give up that, than speak against my Conscience. Therefore, Brethren, I earnestly beg of you to consider what you are doing, for I do humbly apprehend, that denying the Faith of the Church is not the Thing in Question, any more than saying I believe in adult Baptism, when the Faith of the Church is Infant

Infant Baptism, unless you can prove Heresy. Remember the Words of Institution; Brethren, the Apostle don't say, a Brother that don't see as you do, reject; or, a Denier of the Faith of the Church, reject; (for I humbly conceive, a Church is not infallible) but an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition, reject: Which I (with due Submission) apprehend implies the Person's being known to be a Heretick before the Admonition. And I humbly conceive, an Heretick is one that denies some notable Truth, which is grounded upon, or is entirely consistent with the Harmony of the divine Perfections, and the whole Tenor of the written Word of God, in which it is plainly revealed. And as I have not yet seen this to be my Case in the least Respect, I hope, before you proceed any further, you will prove it to be so from what I have here said; which if you do, I hope the Lord will open my Eyes to behold it, and to acknowledge it also. But if you should not so do, and only say I deny the Faith of the Church, and proceed, I hope I shall find
 that

~~that~~ though you, as my spiritual Mother,
 (the Zion in which I trust through the un-
 searchable Riches of God's Grace, and the
 boundless Ocean of my Redeemer's Love,
 I was born again) and your dear Pastor for-
 sake me, yet my dear Redeemer, I hope,
 will be to me as a Covert from this very
 Storm, and as the Shadow of a great Rock
 in a weary Land: But hold! my Pen, go
 not so fast; are not the Hearts of all Men in
 the Lord's Hands? This would be an En-
 couragement to me, was I even at Gaol;
 but here I have to do with the dear Chil-
 dren of God, who I hope will bare a
 Simpathy with thee, O my Soul. Who
 knows, but if the Lord should, or if he
 should not suffer this to go on, but it may
 be in an abundant Manner for his Glory,
 and (we hope) for our Good? And there-
 fore, O my Soul, to Prison and to Death
 for Christ and for Truth; and as the Lord
 upheld his martyr'd Witnesses, doubt not
 but he will carry thee through this great
 Trial. And therefore, my dear Brethren,
 I hope (though not in my own Stength,
 but

but in the Strength of my Lord and Master Jesus Christ the Son of God) that I shall receive the Stroke of Excommunication with some Degree of Chearfulness, as the blessed Martyrs went to the Flames; trusting in the Lord I have Truth and a good Cause on my Side. But if the Lord should, or if he should not suffer this to be, yet *Satan* may be baulk'd (though he may think he hath his Desire) in some Way not thought of by us. However, dear Brethren, consider the Relation we stand in one to another, as Members of that Body, the Head of whom is our Lord Jesus Christ; yea, as Fellow-Heirs of the Grace of God, and Denizens of the heavenly *Canaan*, of that City whose Builder and Maker is God. This consider and look into, and may the Spirit of Jesus guide and direct you in every thing for his own Glory, into whose Arms, even the Arms of my glorious Redeemer and Saviour, I hope through the Assistance of the Spirit to fly, because he hath promised to be near to them that call on him; and in the Day of my Distress will

I call, and humbly hope he will answer me.

I conclude, dear Brethren, with those Words so often used by Divines, *viz.* I shall leave what hath been here said (I hope with a single View to God's Glory, and out of the Simplicity of my Heart) to the Blessing of Almighty God, and your serious (and impartial) Consideration, and subscribe myself, at present,

Your unworthy Brother

London, March
5, 174 $\frac{1}{2}$.

In our Lord Jesus Christ,

10 FE 58

JOHN ALLEN.

